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## Foreword

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# Foreword

*Timothy M. Ravich\**

In the days leading up to the *FIU Law Review* Aviation and Space Law Symposium on February 20, 2015, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced long-anticipated proposed rules for the integration of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)—“drones”—into the national airspace system. The FAA’s rulemaking initiative not only marked a milestone in a new era of aviation, but also served as a fitting departure point for a conference centered broadly on the past, present, and future relationship between law and technology.

For the last two centuries, innovations in aviation—manned or unmanned—have transformed and optimized civilian, commercial, and military life in arenas as diverse as agriculture, tourism, and war. In doing so, however, the operation of airplanes, rockets, and now drones, with their ever-sophisticated sensor suites and indefatigable intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance abilities, pose unusual legal problems under the Constitution and common law, including traditional tort and property principles as well as international norms of trade and armed conflict. This symposium was designed to explore these unique business, legal, and political dimensions by convening globally-recognized subject matter experts to offer insight from academic, private, public, practical, policy, and experiential viewpoints.

In choosing a symposium subject, the topic of aviation and space law was compelling for the *FIU Law Review*. The topic links disciplines studied throughout the university. Within the law school itself, aviation and space law cuts across various areas. Civil and public aviation operations in the United States raise important questions about the expanse of administrative law and federalism and the pliability of the First, Fourth, Fifth, and Tenth Amendments at the local, state, and national level where “smart” robot airplanes and satellites are regular features of life. Additionally, aviation and

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space operations touch on core doctrinal legal areas such as international law, airspace and sovereignty, antitrust, bankruptcy, consumer protection, criminal law, labor law, national security, and intellectual property, both in a litigation and transactional setting. The study of aviation and space law also extends beyond the law school. It encompasses the study of business, medicine (*e.g.*, human physiology and psychology), climatology, political science, history, and other areas, not to mention the STEM subjects of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Given the multidimensional nature of aviation and space law, therefore, the *FIU Law Review* decided that a symposium dedicated to the subject matter of aviation and space law would actively advance a core mission of the FIU law curriculum—to “incorporate important developments in the globalization of both public and private law.”

In hosting this symposium, the *FIU Law Review* not only recognized the contemporary relevance and interdisciplinary character of the subject matter, but rightly spotlighted Florida’s extraordinary historical and ongoing role in global aviation initiatives and activities. International airports in the state are among the world’s busiest cargo and passenger staging points while Central Florida provides critical planetary space launch pads and “spaceports.” FIU itself is built upon an abandoned airfield—the former Tamiami Airport. Its Founding President, Charles Perry, decided that the control tower should never be destroyed and so it remains standing today at the center of campus, as FIU’s “Ivory Tower.” Meanwhile, current Miami City Hall was the former terminal from which “Clipper” flying boats lifted off in the 1930s enroute to Buenos Aires, connecting North and South America. A major causeway to Key Biscayne is named for Eddie Rickenbacker, the founder of Eastern Air Lines. And, in the background, the Florida Bar features a special class of “Board Certified Aviation Lawyers” while state lawmakers are at the forefront of space tourism laws. What better place to host this event?

In closing, the faculty, administration, and student editors of the *FIU Law Review* deserve enormous commendation for their substantial efforts in advancing scholarship and dialogue in the area of aviation and space law, and for flawlessly hosting authors, speakers, and participants from around the world. As a matter of personal privilege, then, I write here to specifically thank Franco Bacigalupo, Audrey Salbo, and Kristina Bado for their interest and engagement over the span of more than one year in getting this project off the ground, as it were. These students, like every student I have had the privilege of interacting with as a teacher at the FIU College of Law, are remarkable for their ability to manage competing obligations with great professionalism and competence. Thanks also to Frantz Pierre and his information technology staff, who kept us away from technical turbulence while facilitating the live Internet streaming of this event to attendees

worldwide. Thanks to Dean Alex Acosta and his predecessor Len Strickman for their confidence and for giving me the opportunity to introduce the topic of aviation and space law into FIU Law curriculum. Thanks also to James Beckman and my colleagues at the University of Central Florida's Department of Legal Studies for their active support of this project. And, finally, congratulations to the *FIU Law Review*: Godspeed and Blue Skies.

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